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And there came a day, a day unlike any other, when Earth's mightiest heroes found themselves united against a common threat! On that day, the Avengers were born--to fight the foes no single super hero could withstand! Stan Lee presents…

THE NEW AVENGERS

A massive super-villain riot at the high-tech maximum security prison known as the Raft brings together the heroes who would become the New Avengers--Captain America, Iron Man, Luke Cage, Spider-Man, Spider-Woman, and the mysterious powerhouse known as the Sentry. One member of the hero community who aided in the fight refused to join the newly-formed team--Matt Murdock, known throughout Hell's Kitchen as Daredevil.

When Captain America is given information that the Silver Samurai, one of the Raft's escapees, has returned to Japan, he goes to Murdock to ask for help. Murdock's personal problems prevent him from aiding the New Avengers, but he offers the services of a mysterious friend--Ronin.

Cap sends Ronin to Japan to infiltrate the Clan Yashida, a family of Japanese Yakuza. Ronin discovers that the Hand--a ritualistic cult of ninjas--along with Silver Samurai's old partner Viper, a.k.a. Madame Hydra, is recruiting the Silver Samurai.

Ronin is attacked by an army of Hand assassins and followed back to Tony Stark's Osaka penthouse apartment. The rest of the New Avengers, awaiting Ronin's return, find themselves faced with hundreds of ninjas…

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FORTRESS YASHIDA
OSAKA, JAPAN
15 MINUTES AGO

〈KENUICHIO HARADA, IT IS OUR HONOR TO BRING YOU BACK TO THE PLACE OF YOUR BIRTH.〉

〈IT IS OUR HONOR TO BRING THE GREAT SILVER SAMURAI BACK TO FORTRESS YASHIDA--〉

〈--WHERE HE BELONGS.〉

〈KURODA, IF YOU BROUGHT ME HERE JUST SO THE HAND CAN KILL ME, LET IT BE KNOWN THAT--〉

〈MASTER HARADA, I UNDERSTAND THAT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN YOUR FAMILY AND THE HAND HAS BEEN SOMEWHAT STRAINED IN THE PAST...〉

〈...BUT I ASSURE YOU... YOU ARE MISREADING THE INTENDED TONE OF OUR REUNION.〉

〈WE BRING YOU GIFTS.〉

〈JAPAN NEEDS THE CLAN YASHIDA IN PLACE AND THE SILVER SAMURAI AT ITS HEAD.〉

〈THAT IS WHY WE HAD MEMBERS OF THE HAND SEARCHING ALL OVER THE WORLD FOR YOU.〉

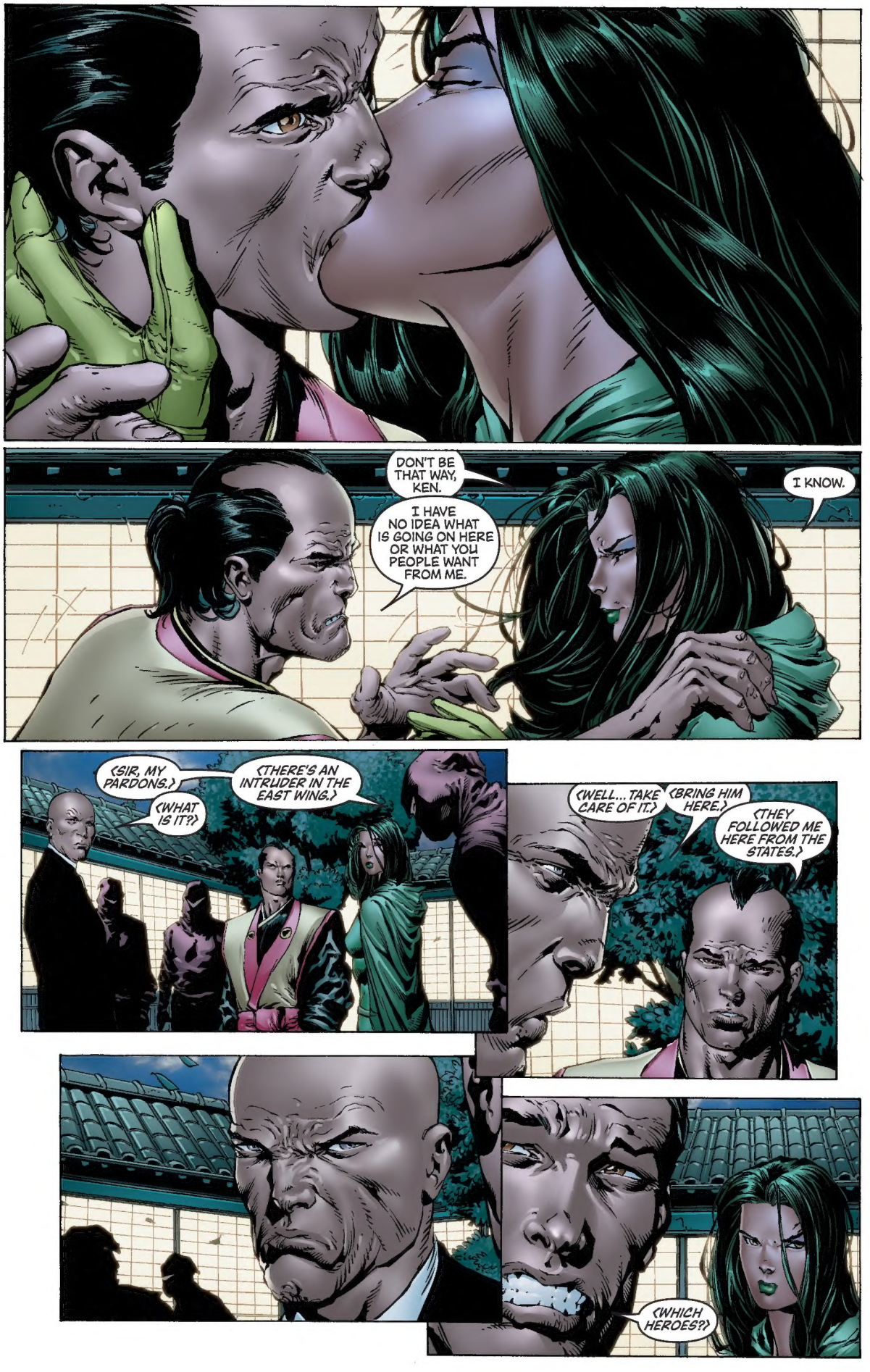
〈WE HAD NO IDEA S.H.I.E.L.D. HAD YOU IN CUSTODY UNTIL YOU WERE LUCKY ENOUGH TO ESCAPE.〉

〈WHY WERE YOU LOOKING FOR ME?〉

〈I DON'T UNDERSTAND.〉

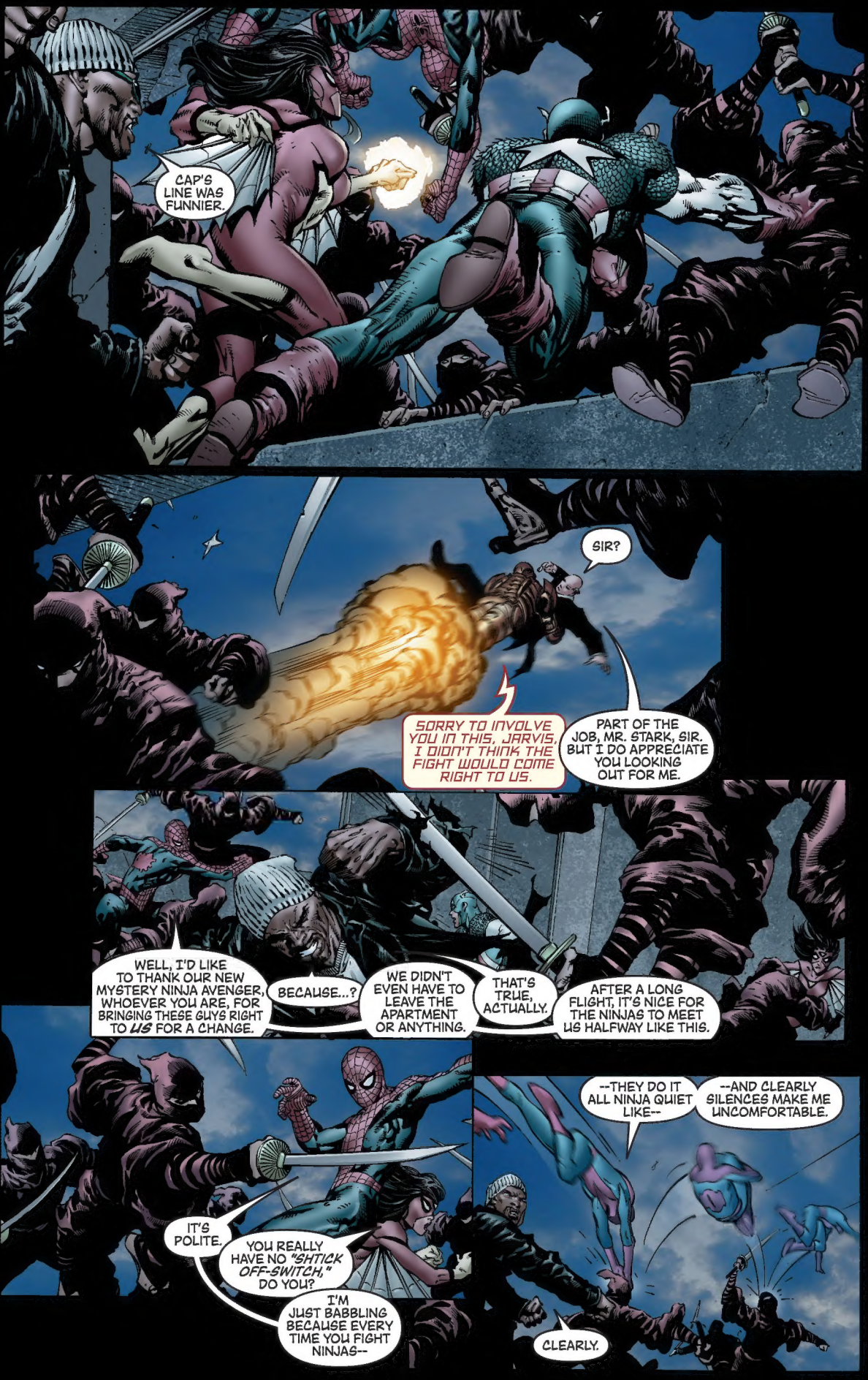
WELL, THAT'S BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW HOW THE NEW WORLD WORKS.

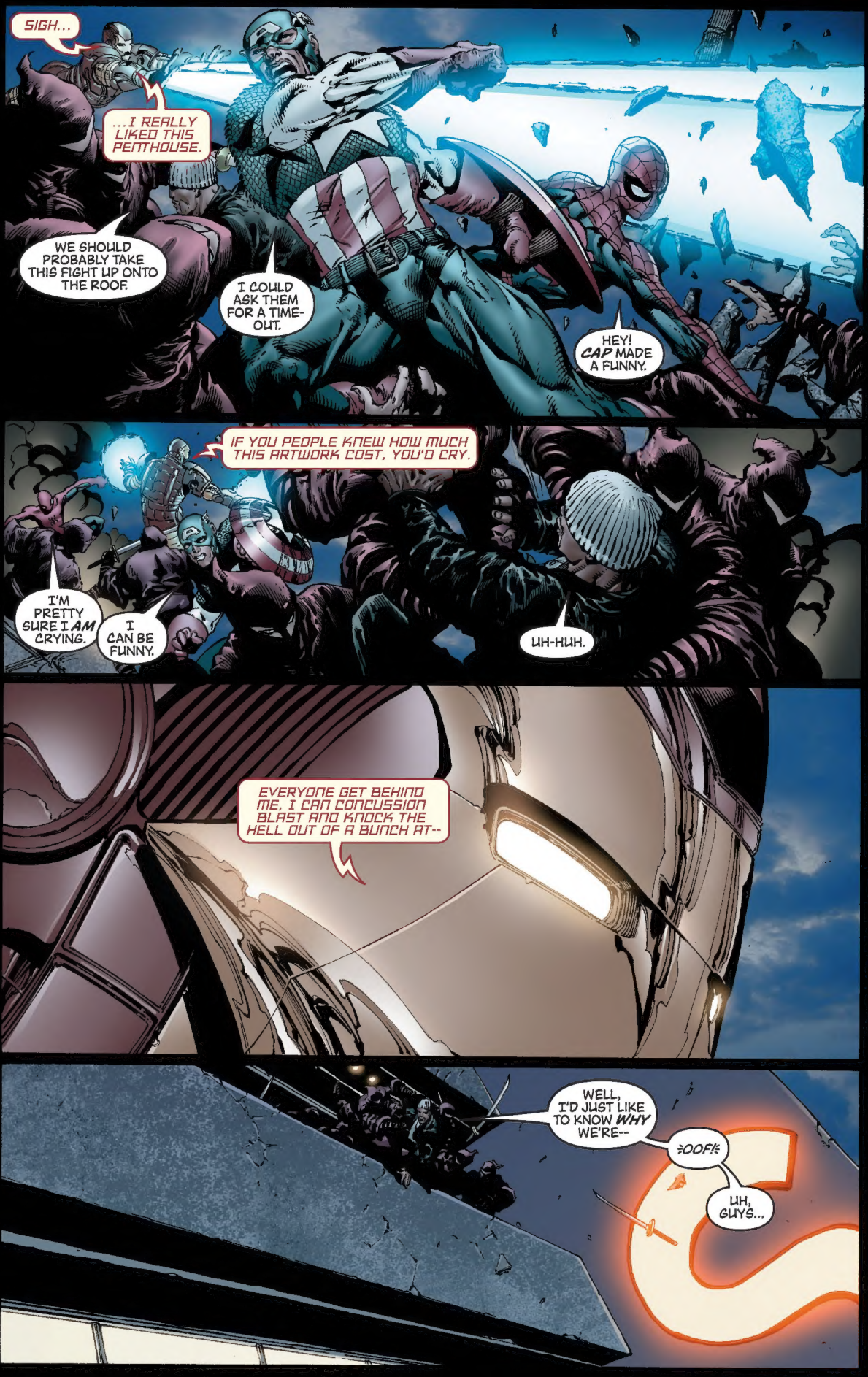
S.H.I.E.L.D. HAS FALLEN APART. IT'S ROTTEN FROM THE INSIDE.
I TELL YOU-- AS MUCH AS I WANTED NICK FURY'S BLOOD ON MY HANDS AS HE GURGLED HIS LAST BREATH...
...YOU HAVE TO ADMIRE THE FACT THAT HE KEPT S.H.I.E.L.D. TOGETHER BY SHEER FORCE OF WILL.
WITHOUT HIM... ROTTEN.
MADAME HYDRA.
THAT'S HOW YOU, THE SILVER SAMURAI, CAN BE PULLED OFF A PRIVATE PLANE AND DETAINED WITHOUT ANYONE KNOWING IT HAPPENED.
THEY'RE ROTTEN.
AND HYDRA, MY HYDRA, IS EVEN WORSE OFF.
"CUT OFF ONE OF OUR HEADS AND TWO MORE GROW IN ITS PLACE."
WELL, IT SEEMS THAT LATELY THAT MEANS ONE HEAD GOES THIS WAY AND THE OTHER GOES THAT WAY.
IT SICKENS ME ON A PROFOUND LEVEL.
MY ENTIRE LIFE DEDICATED TO AN IDEAL THAT IS BEING TWISTED INTO ITSELF BY SELFISH AMATEURS.
NOW HYDRA HAS BECOME A GROUP WITHOUT MEANING OR PURPOSE.
NOT BEING ABLE TO ADAPT ITSELF TO THE FUTURE.
THAT'S WHY I AM SO VERY GLAD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, KENNY.


DON'T BE THAT WAY, KEN.
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT IS GOING ON HERE OR WHAT YOU PEOPLE WANT FROM ME.
I KNOW.
〈SIR, MY PARDONS.〉
〈THERE'S AN INTRUDER IN THE EAST WING.〉
〈WHAT IS IT?〉
〈WELL... TAKE CARE OF IT.〉
〈BRING HIM HERE.〉
〈THEY FOLLOWED ME HERE FROM THE STATES.〉
〈WHICH HEROES?〉

STARK ENTERPRISES PENTHOUSE
OSAKA, JAPAN
NOW

ANYONE SPEAK JAPANESE?
A LITTLE.
YOU KNOW WHAT THEY'RE SAYING?
JUST PICKING UP BITS AND PIECES, BUT SOMETHING ABOUT US DYING A THOUSAND DEATHS AND OUR BLOOD WILL RUN THROUGH THE STREETS OF OSAKA...
I *KNEW* THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT US!
HEY, GUYS...
...AM I THE ONLY ONE WHO THINKS BEING AN AVENGER SOUNDED A LOT COOLER IN THE ABSTRACT?
GENTLEMEN OF THE HAND, STAND DOWN. YOU ARE TRESPASSING ON PRIVATE PROPERTY!
DUDE, I WAS IN THE MIDDLE OF A HUMOROUS QUIP.


CAP'S LINE WAS FUNNIER.
SIR?
SORRY TO INVOLVE YOU IN THIS, JARVIS, I DIDN'T THINK THE FIGHT WOULD COME RIGHT TO US.
PART OF THE JOB, MR. STARK, SIR. BUT I DO APPRECIATE YOU LOOKING OUT FOR ME.
WELL, I'D LIKE TO THANK OUR NEW MYSTERY NINJA AVENGER, WHOEVER YOU ARE, FOR BRINGING THESE GUYS RIGHT TO *US* FOR A CHANGE.
BECAUSE...?
WE DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TO LEAVE THE APARTMENT OR ANYTHING.
THAT'S TRUE, ACTUALLY.
AFTER A LONG FLIGHT, IT'S NICE FOR THE NINJAS TO MEET US HALFWAY LIKE THIS.
IT'S POLITE.
YOU REALLY HAVE NO "SHTICK OFF-SWITCH," DO YOU?
I'M JUST BABBLING BECAUSE EVERY TIME YOU FIGHT NINJAS--
--THEY DO IT ALL NINJA QUIET LIKE--
--AND CLEARLY SILENCES MAKE ME UNCOMFORTABLE.
CLEARLY.


SIGH...
...I REALLY LIKED THIS PENTHOUSE.
WE SHOULD PROBABLY TAKE THIS FIGHT UP ONTO THE ROOF.
I COULD ASK THEM FOR A TIME-OUT.
HEY! CAP MADE A FUNNY.
IF YOU PEOPLE KNEW HOW MUCH THIS ARTWORK COST, YOU'D CRY.
I'M PRETTY SURE I AM CRYING.
I CAN BE FUNNY.
UH-HUH.
EVERYONE GET BEHIND ME, I CAN CONCUSSION BLAST AND KNOCK THE HELL OUT OF A BUNCH AT--
WELL, I'D JUST LIKE TO KNOW WHY WE'RE--
=OOF!=
UH, GUYS...

CHRISTMAS!

UH, LUKE!

LUKE!

DAMN!

AGH!

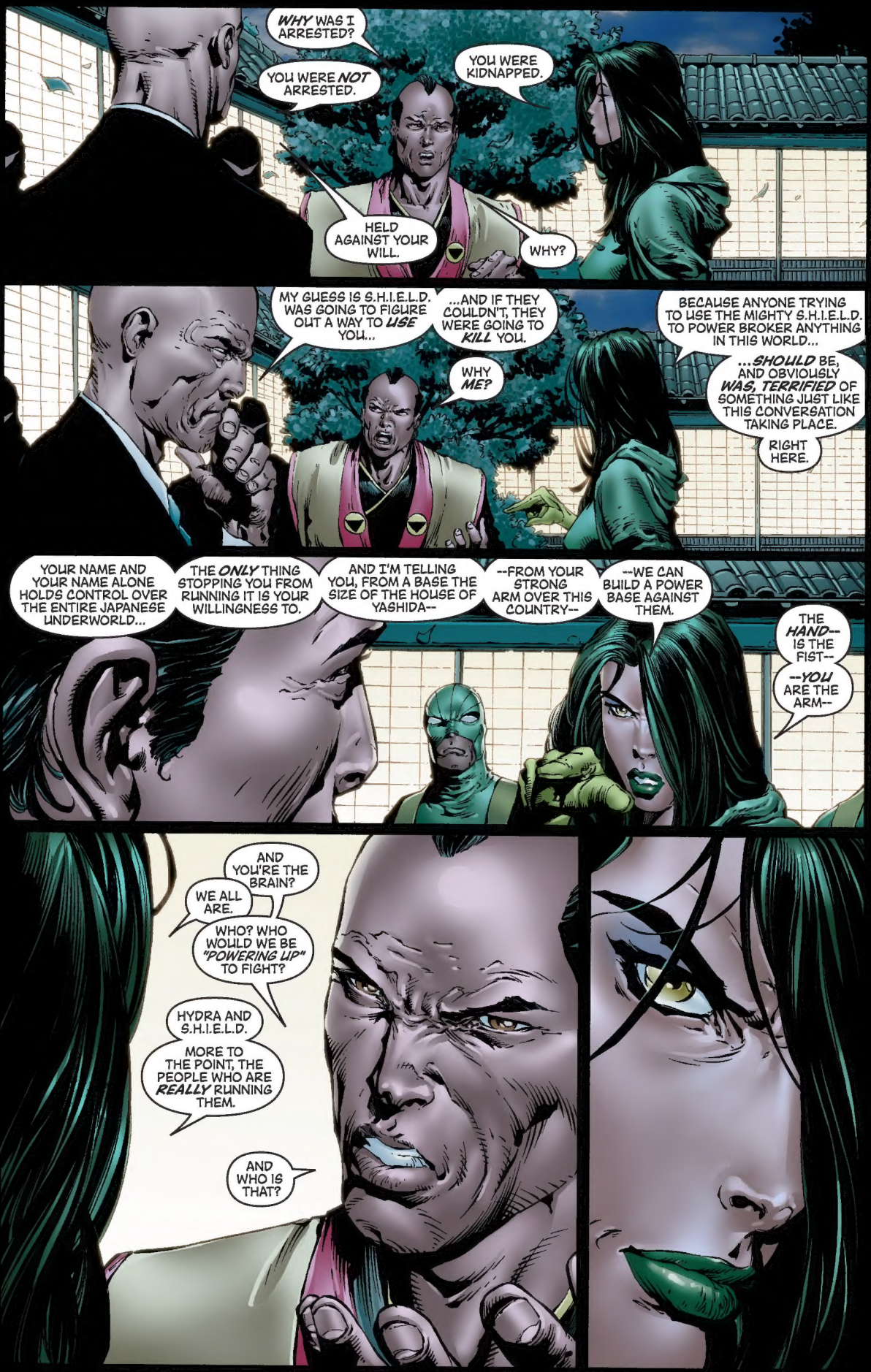
SLICCEE

BOOM

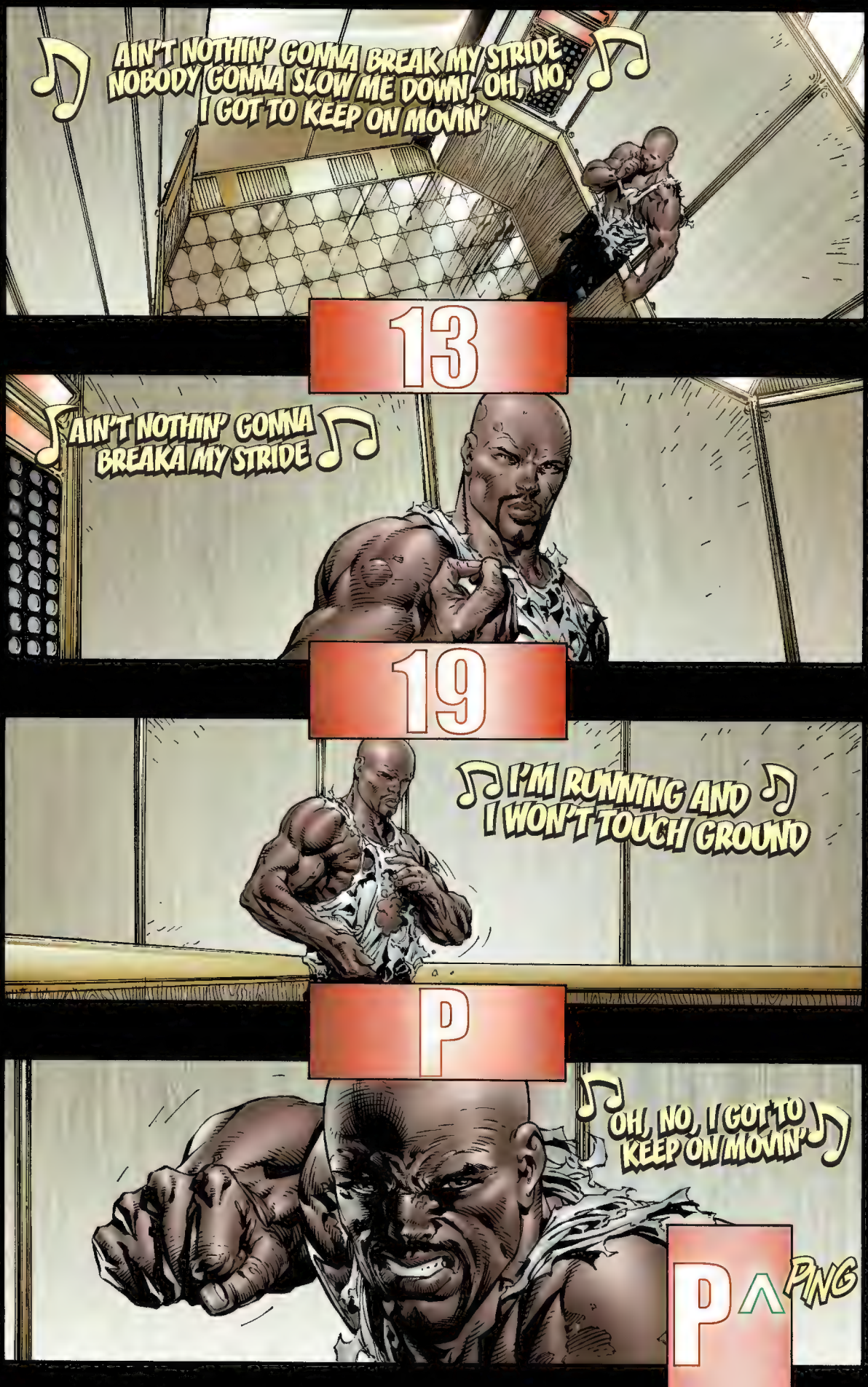
KEEP FIGHTING, I'LL GO--

WAAT

AGH!


WHY WAS I ARRESTED?
YOU WERE NOT ARRESTED.
YOU WERE KIDNAPPED.
HELD AGAINST YOUR WILL.
WHY?
MY GUESS IS S.H.I.E.L.D. WAS GOING TO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO USE YOU...
...AND IF THEY COULDN'T, THEY WERE GOING TO KILL YOU.
WHY ME?
BECAUSE ANYONE TRYING TO USE THE MIGHTY S.H.I.E.L.D. TO POWER BROKER ANYTHING IN THIS WORLD...
...SHOULD BE, AND OBVIOUSLY WAS, TERRIFIED OF SOMETHING JUST LIKE THIS CONVERSATION TAKING PLACE.
RIGHT HERE.
YOUR NAME AND YOUR NAME ALONE HOLDS CONTROL OVER THE ENTIRE JAPANESE UNDERWORLD...
THE ONLY THING STOPPING YOU FROM RUNNING IT IS YOUR WILLINGNESS TO.
AND I'M TELLING YOU, FROM A BASE THE SIZE OF THE HOUSE OF YASHIDA--
--FROM YOUR STRONG ARM OVER THIS COUNTRY--
--WE CAN BUILD A POWER BASE AGAINST THEM.
THE HAND-- IS THE FIST--
--YOU ARE THE ARM--
AND YOU'RE THE BRAIN?
WE ALL ARE.
WHO? WHO WOULD WE BE "POWERING UP" TO FIGHT?
HYDRA AND S.H.I.E.L.D.
MORE TO THE POINT, THE PEOPLE WHO ARE REALLY RUNNING THEM.
AND WHO IS THAT?

I'LL TELL YOU ONCE I KNOW I CAN TRUST YOU AGAIN.
YOU'RE NOT EXACTLY OOZING THAT TRUSTWORTHINESS HERE.
BECAUSE I KNOW THAT LOOK, VIPER.
THAT'S THE LOOK YOU MAKE WHEN YOU PLAY YOUR GAMES.
IT'S THE FACE I MAKE WHEN I KNOW I'M RIGHT.
WE'RE HERE TO SAVE YOU.
THE SYSTEM WE WERE FIGHTING AGAINST--S.H.I.E.L.D.--AND THE SYSTEM WE WERE USING TO FIGHT AGAINST IT--HYDRA--ARE ROTTING.
A NEW WORLDWIDE CORPORATE POWER STRUGGLE FOR THIS GENERATION IS GOING TO FORM IN ITS PLACE.
AND I'M SAYING YOU NEED TO REEVALUATE YOUR PLACE IN THIS WORLD.
BECAUSE EITHER YOU STEP UP OR THEY'RE GOING TO ASSASSINATE YOU.
YOU HAVE TO MAKE A LIFE DECISION HERE, KENNY.
SIR? MY APOLOGIES.
WHERE'S THIS INTRUDER?
HE FLED. WE PURSUED HIM. THE BATTLE IS UNDERWAY.
BATTLE?
THE MASKED INTRUDER CAME HERE WITH AN ASSORTMENT OF AMERICAN COSTUMED HEROES.
WE'VE ENGAGED THEM.
WHO TOLD YOU TO DO THAT?!


AIN'T NOTHIN' GONNA BREAK MY STRIDE
NOBODY GONNA SLOW ME DOWN, OH, NO,
I GOT TO KEEP ON MOVIN'
13
AIN'T NOTHIN' GONNA
BREAKA MY STRIDE
19
I'M RUNNING AND
I WON'T TOUCH GROUND
P
OH, NO, I GOT TO
KEEP ON MOVIN'
P
PING

I'M BACK!
YOU DIDN'T HAPPEN TO BRING THE X-MEN WITH YOU?
BOY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU HAND NINJAS USE IN YOUR LAUNDRY...
...BUT YOU GUYS SMELL LIKE A GARDEN OF LILACS.
IT'S REALLY QUITE LOVELY.
YOU EVER GET A WHIFF OF DOCTOR DOOM?
OH, I KNOW!
HE HASN'T WASHED THAT GREEN CAPE OF HIS SINCE THE KREE-SKRULL WAR.
WHAT ARE YOU BABBLING ABOUT NOW?
YOU'RE RIGHT, FIGHT'S GONE ON TOO LONG. I'M OUT OF MATERIAL.
THEN IT WAS WORTH IT.
HHAA!!!
I CAN WRAP THIS UP NOW.
ARE YOU OKAY?
I'M BACK ON LINE. I'M OKAY.
TRY TO WORK YOUR WAY BEHIND ME, AND I CAN END THIS WITH A COUPLE OF WELL-PLACED--
<RETREAT! REGROUP! LEAVE NO MAN BEHIND!>
I'M BACK!
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<RETREAT! REGROUP! LEAVE NO MAN BEHIND!>

WELL, THAT WAS RUDE...
STARK KO.

THEY QUIT?
THEY WERE TOLD TO PULL BACK.
THEY WANT US TO FOLLOW.
NO.
SURE THEY DO.
NO.
I THINK THEY ATTACKED US WITHOUT PERMISSION.
WELL, THEN I HOPE SOMEONE DOCKS THEIR NINJA PAY.
WHO *ARE* YOU?
I'M SO SORRY THIS HAPPENED. I WOULD NEVER HAVE BROUGHT THIS FIGHT TO YOU.
I THOUGHT I HAD LOST THEM IN THE CAVERNS OF THE CITY.
NO ONE'S BLAMING YOU FOR THIS AT ALL.
YOU DID WHAT I ASKED YOU TO. *THEY* ATTACKED US, NOT YOU. YOU FOUGHT ADMIRABLY.
WHO IS THIS?
UH, GUYS...
...WHERE'S SPIDER-WOMAN?
JESSICA?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
WHAT ARE *YOU* DOING HERE, AGENT DREW?
WE HAD A DEAL.

THE DEAL IS--
SHUT YOUR MOUTH!
THE DEAL IS YOU GET YOUR POWERS AND WE OWN YOU. *THAT'S* THE DEAL.
YOU AND YOUR LITTLE PALS FLY ANYWHERE TO DO ANYTHING, YOU *TELL* YOUR CONTACT AND *HE* TELLS ME.
YOU COME HERE? TO JAPAN? KNOWING WHAT IS AT STAKE AND YOU DON'T TELL US?
I SHOULD KILL YOU RIGHT HERE, YOU FAT PIG.
I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT WAS GOING ON HERE. I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW YOU WERE *HERE.*
THIS $%^# HAPPENS SO FAST WITH THESE GUYS, I DON'T HAVE TIME TO GO HOME AND FEED MY--
YOU LIKE YOUR POWERS, LI'L JESSICA?
YOU WANT TO GO BACK TO WHAT YOUR LIFE WAS BEFORE?
MISERABLE. JUST ONE OF *THEM.* YOU *WANT* THAT?
WE GAVE YOU YOUR POWERS BACK, AND WE CAN TAKE THEM AWAY.
NOW HIT ME WITH A VENOM BLAST AND TAKE ME DOWN.
AND WHEN I SAY SO, YOU LET ME GO. YOU *GOT* IT?
HIT YOU?
NOW.
WHAT ARE YOU *TALKING* ABOUT?
YOUR LITTLE FRIENDS ARE RIGHT BEHIND YOU.

HIT ME.
AGH!
YAGH!
ZZZAATTTT
YAGH!
WHOA, WHOA, WHOA... NICE SHOOTIN', TEX.
WHY'D YOU TAKE OFF LIKE THAT?

I--I DIDN'T WANT HER TO SNEAK AWAY AGAIN. S.H.I.E.L.D.'S BEEN CHASING HER FOR YEARS.
I'VE *HAD* IT WITH HER.
WHAT DID SHE SAY?
WHAT?
WE SAW YOU TALKING TO HER.
SHE--SHE SAID WHAT SHE ALWAYS SAYS. AND THEN SHE CALLED ME FAT, SO I BLASTED HER.
SHE JUST STOOD THERE AND LET YOU?
ARE YOU KIDDING? SHE WAS ABOUT TO LUNGE.
YOU DON'T RUN OFF BY YOURSELF, OKAY? WE'RE A TEAM.
NO, YOU'RE RIGHT. YOU'RE RIGHT. I'M SORRY.
IT'S A NEW WORLD TO ME, ALL THIS. YEARS AS A S.H.I.E.L.D. AGENT--YOU JUST KIND OF GO OFF BY YOURSELF AS SOON AS YOU HAVE THE INTEL.
SPIDEY, WEB HER HANDS BEHIND HER BACK AND WEB HER FEET TOGETHER.
WHAT ARE WE DOING? JUST TAKING HYDRA GIRL HOME WITH US?
SHE'S A WANTED TERRORIST. TOP TEN INTERPOL.
YOU GUYS MIGHT SEE SOME SERIOUS BANK FOR THIS.
I LIKE BANK.
WHAT ABOUT THE SILVER SAMURAI?
JUST GUESSING... IS THAT HIM?
OY.

TO BE CONCLUDED...